

REMARKS

Claims 1-2, 5, 12-13, 30 and 33 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 30 are amended and claims 3, 4, 6-11, 14-29, 31-32 and 34-35 are canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter disclosed therein. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claim 1, 2, 5, 12, 13, 30 and 33 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hirakawa et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,097,358) in view of Tanaka et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,052,112). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

In particular, none of the applied references, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest a driving method of a liquid crystal element and associated driving device, the driving method including sequentially selecting a plurality of first sub-field periods continuous with respect to one another and a plurality of second sub-field periods continuous with respect to one another, wherein each of the plurality of second sub-field periods is substantially equal to a length of a sum of the plurality of first sub-fields, as recited in independent claim 1 and similarly recited in independent claim 30.

Hirakawa teaches a method for driving an AC driven PDP to produce gradation display by dividing a field into at least three sub-fields in time sequence, each of the sub-fields having a weighted luminance and being provided with an address period for selecting a cell to emit light for display and a sustained period for sustaining a light emitting state (Abstract).

Tanaka teaches a sub-field array formed by providing a sub-field corresponding to a m-th bit sub-field bit substantially at the center of the time axis of all the sub-field periods, and providing the other sub-fields than the m-th significant one on the opposite sides of and substantially in line symmetry with respect to the m-th significant bit sub-field (Abstract).

The Office Action admits that Hirakawa does not teach that the electro-optic element is a liquid crystal element (Office Action, page 4, lines 18-20). Moreover, in the March 7 Office Action, the Patent Office asserted that each discharge must necessarily and inherently constitute a length of period because a discharge requires a certain period of time to execute, and thus Hirakawa teaches that each of the plurality of second sub-field periods equals to a length of a sum of the plurality of first sub-field periods and any one of the first sub-field periods. However, Hirakawa teaches a relationship between the respective weights of luminance of the sub-field groups SFG-2 and SFG-1, which is different from the relationship between the periods of time of the two sub-field groups. As previously argued in the May 1 Amendment, Hirakawa only teaches the relationship between the weight of the discharge between the groups SFG-1 and SFG-2, and does not teach a relationship between the periods of time of the two types of discharges. The current Office Action states that the expression "sub-frame 1 + (sub-frame 1 x 0)" does technically qualify as a sum of first sub-field periods because independent claims 1 and 30 previously recited that the plurality of second sub-field periods substantially correspond to a length of a sum of the plurality of first sub-field periods and any one of the first sub-field periods. Accordingly, independent claims 1 and 30 are now further amended to better recite that each of the plurality of second sub-field periods is substantially equal to a length of a sum of the plurality of first sub-field periods and any one of the first sub-field period. As a result, an expression such as, for example, "sub-frame 1 + (sub-frame 1 x 0)" would not qualify as a sum of first sub-field periods.

Thus, Hirakawa fails to teach that the period of time of each of the second sub-field periods is equal to a sum of the plurality of first sub-field period and any one of the first sub-field periods, as recited in independent claims 1 and 30.

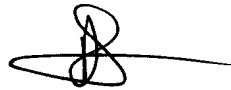
Moreover, Tanaka fails to cure deficiencies in Hirakawa in disclosing or rendering obvious this feature. Accordingly, independent claims 1 and 30, and their dependent claims,

are patentable over a combination of the applied references. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 2, 5, 12, 13, 30 and 33 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Tarik M. Nabi
Registration No. 55,478

JAO:TMN/amw

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OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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